

**Harpswell Conservation Commission
Minutes
February 3, 2016**

Opened Meeting: 3:02 PM.

Roll Call: Mary Ann Nahf, Deirdre Strachan, Sue Vachon, Ann Nemrow, Burr Taylor, Anne Perry, Paul Ciesielski, Wendy Batson. Guest Jane Covey, Chair, Mitchell Field Committee.

Approval of 01/20/2016 and 01/25/2016 Minutes: Both minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Presentation: Proposal for the Mitchell Field Pier and Boat Launch.

Jane Covey presented an Executive Summary consisting of the Waterfront Vision, Pier and Boat launch recommendations, a list of documents and a detailed map of the waterfront area consisting of existing and proposed changes. In presenting an overview, she requested the HCC supply support, input and questions. **A public forum is scheduled for March 1, 2016.**

The following points were noted...

- Background: Action is required due to the accelerated deterioration of the pier, particularly the birthing platform and the northern dolphin, as well as the collapsing pump house. The structures are rendered unsafe and are fenced off from the public.
- The Master Plan design will be in compliance with the vision as outlined in the original report. A feasibility study and authorization to construct an artificial reef will be sought from DEP, Coast Guard and Corps of Engineers agencies for environmental and navigational impacts. If approved, sinking inert material as opposed to salvage would constitute a savings of \$750,000.00 to the Town. The total estimate for demolishing stands between \$3,500,000.00 to \$4,000,000.00.
- Full and/or partial options for demolishing the existing pier, boat launch and pump house structures remain unresolved and are contingent upon the final plan
- The designated location for the artificial reef is over 60' deep at low tide. Some existing eelgrass beds would be impinged upon.
- The construction of the ramp and boat launch is slated for public recreational and commercial uses for small to mid-sized vessels. North of the pier remains zoned commercial for future use.
- The ramp will be two-lanes wide with all-tide launching floats and will cost 10% of the total, or \$330,000.00.
- Vehicular and trailer access to the pier and boat launch areas will remain separated from the adjoining pedestrian and swimming areas. Parking will be relocated and expanded.
- To date, no details have been drawn pertaining to operational measures, storage or fees for public use.

- Financing- Up to 50% public funding in the form of federal and state grants. Town portion to be in the form of a bond to be floated 2017. Various warrants are being prepared by the Mitchell Field Committee.

Comments by Committee Members:

- P. Ciesielski outlined the existing deposition and erosion problem that exists along the shore line. When waves hit the shore at an oblique angle, they slow down, depositing the sand they have been portaging. Similarly, as the waves, now sediment starved, move around a structure, they again hit land picking up sand further down the beach. This process leads to shoreline retreat and depletion of the sand. P. Ciesielski states that though this natural process is slow, it will be further exacerbated by future sea level rise.
- B. Taylor expressed concern that people living far from Mitchell Field may feel the substantial cost to the Town for the renovations may not be useful to them and that, indeed, it might be detrimental to their own community. He cautioned the committee to verbally “tread lightly.”
- Concern for the welfare of the eelgrass beds was generally voiced.
- Acknowledgement that inert artificial reefs can be beneficial in providing additional habitat for foraging and juvenile species.

Other Committee Responses:

The Town Lands Committee (TLC) questions the need for such a substantial boat launching plan and has concerns about the issue of town-wide equity. The Mitchell Field Committee (MFC) disagrees with the TLC and feels the plan proposal complies with the interest of the Town, that the area is multi-use and provides a variety of facilities and programs to interest all. MFC also feels that increased usage of the waterfront area brings tourist dollars to the Town.

Announcements:

Pesticide Certification:

M. Nahf talked with Gary Fish, Board of pesticide Control, regarding information on the procedure for landscape professionals to acquire pesticide certification. She has the information.

Seminar:

Chip Osborne is holding an all-day seminar on February 29 at the Portland Hilton Hotel. The course, titled “Organic Systems Approach to Turf Management” is a “how to” for lawn care professionals.

Less Toxic Pest Controls:

M. Nahf announced flyers are forthcoming on line under the heading of pesticides and include information on deer ticks, moths, adelgids and factors that are bad for bees.

Modern Pesticide Control:

M. Nahf, responded to the company's concerns and identified the proposed changes as being "outside use" only, and that stem injection and painting techniques to save wind pollinated trees is permitted by certified applicators. She suggested that any concerns/problems aired by clients to the company should be noted for future discussion.

Updates:**Publicity and Outreach for Pesticides Ordinance - Annual Meeting:**

The following groups were mentioned with members volunteering to discuss the proposed pesticide ordinance: A one-page handout will be prepared.

Cundy's Harbor Garden Club:	Anne Perry
Gun Point Rd. Assoc.:	Ann Nemrow
Holbrooks Foundation:	Deirdre Strachan
Rose Association:	Wendy Batson
HHLT:	Mary Ann Nahf.
Lands & Marine Resource Comms.	Mary Ann Nahf

Adjourned: 4:20 PM.

Meetings: February 17, March 2 at 3:00 PM.

Note: March 1, Public Forum on the Mitchell Field Project
March 12, Town Annual Meeting.

Scribe: Ann Nemrow